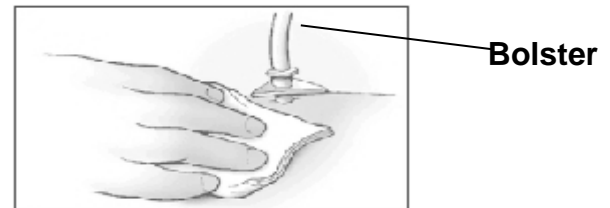


Caring for Your Feeding Tube

Cleaning the Skin and Under the Bolster

It is important that your feeding tube, bolster and the skin around it remain clean to prevent infection. The bolster is a round disk that fits around your feeding tube and sits on the skin. Gently wash the skin around your feeding tube each day. Follow these steps:

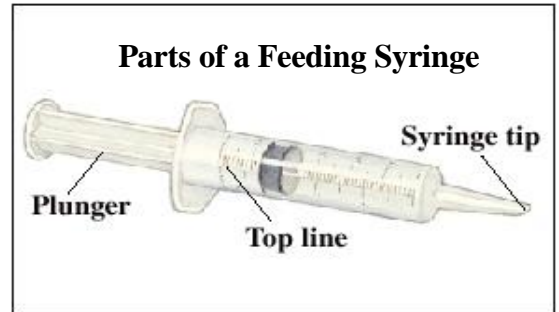
1. Wash your hands.
2. Wet a soft cloth or gauze with warm, soapy water.
3. Gently wipe the skin around the feeding tube.
4. Gently lift the bolster just enough to get the soft cloth or gauze under it. Be careful not to pull on the feeding tube.
5. Wipe the bolster, the skin under the bolster and the base of the feeding tube.
6. Check for redness, swelling, bleeding, or leakage around the tube. Tell your healthcare team if this occurs.
7. Rinse well with clear, warm water. This can be done in the shower. It is ok to take off the bandages, let the shower water gently flow over the tube, and then gently clean it as directed.
8. Pat dry with a clean soft cloth.
9. Apply a protective skin barrier or antibacterial ointment to the skin.
10. Gently push the bolster back against the skin.
11. Gently turn the feeding tube in a complete circle. This helps keep the tube from sticking to the inside of the stomach.
12. Wash your hands.



Checking Residuals

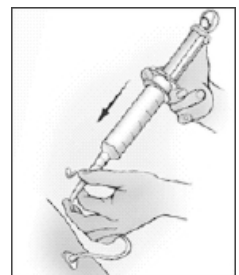
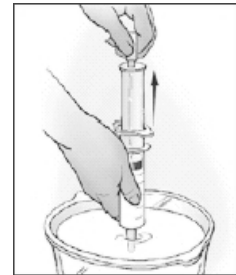
Residuals are the fluid in the stomach that is left over from the previous feeding. Always check residuals before using your feeding tube.

1. Get supplies: feeding syringe, empty cup.
2. Bend and pinch the feeding tube between your fingers to prevent contents in the tube from leaking out.
3. Open the cap of the feeding tube.
4. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
5. Unbend and release the feeding tube.
6. Pull back the plunger of the feeding syringe to remove residuals from your stomach.
7. Measure the amount of residual in the syringe with the numbers on the side of the syringe. If the syringe is full, empty the residuals into a cup and repeat the steps above. Bend and pinch the feeding tube before you remove the feeding syringe.



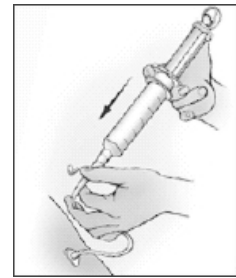
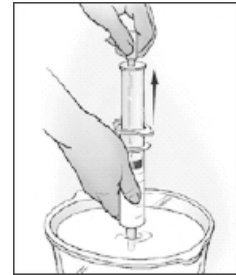
If residual is less than 100 ml:

1. Replace all the residuals back into the stomach.
2. Flush the tubing following the instructions below:
 - a. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the water.
 - b. Draw up 60 ml of water.
 - c. Bend and pinch the feeding tube in-between your fingers to prevent contents in the tube from leaking out.
 - d. Open the cap of the feeding tube.
 - e. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
 - f. Unbend and release the feeding tube by holding it straight up.
 - g. Push down on the plunger gently. Let the water run through the tube.
 - h. Bend and pinch the feeding tube between your fingers to prevent contents in tube from leaking out.
 - i. Remove the feeding syringe and close the cap on the feeding tube.



If residual is greater than 100 ml:

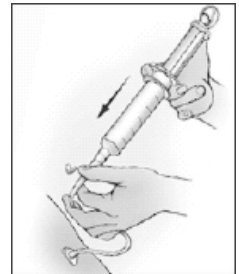
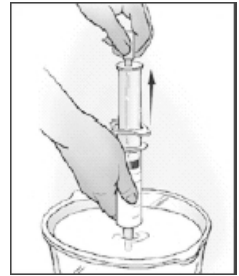
1. Replace all stomach contents back into the stomach.
2. Flush the tubing following the instructions below:
 - a. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the water.
 - b. Draw up 60 ml of water.
 - c. Bend and pinch the feeding tube in-between your fingers to prevent contents in the tube from leaking out.
 - d. Open the cap of the feeding tube.
 - e. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
 - f. Unbend and release the feeding tube by holding it straight up.
 - g. Push down on the plunger gently. Let the water run through the tube.
 - h. Bend and pinch the feeding tube between your fingers to prevent contents in tube from leaking out.
 - i. Remove the feeding syringe and close the cap on the feeding tube.
3. Wait one hour and recheck residual.
 - a. If residual is less than 100 ml proceed with your feeding.
 - b. If residual is still greater than 100 ml call your healthcare team.



Flushing Your Feeding Tube

You need to keep the feeding tube from getting clogged by flushing it with warm water before and after each feeding and before and after giving any medicines. Flushing your tube also gives you extra water that your body needs.

1. Fill a clean bowl with warm water.
2. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the water.
3. Draw up 60 ml of water.
4. Bend and pinch the feeding tube between your fingers to prevent contents in tube from leaking out.
5. Open the cap on the feeding tube.
6. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
7. Unbend and release the feeding tube by holding it straight up.
8. Push down on the plunger gently. Let the water run through the tube.
9. Bend and pinch feeding tube between your fingers to prevent contents in tube from leaking out.
10. Remove the feeding syringe.
11. Close the cap on the feeding tube.
12. Tape the tube to the skin with medical paper tape or silk-like tape.



Bolus Tube Feedings

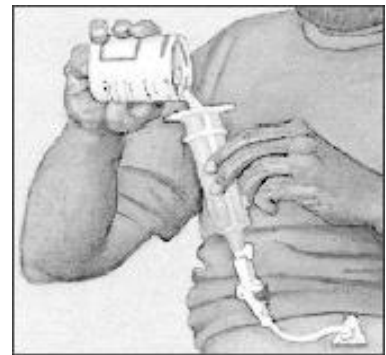
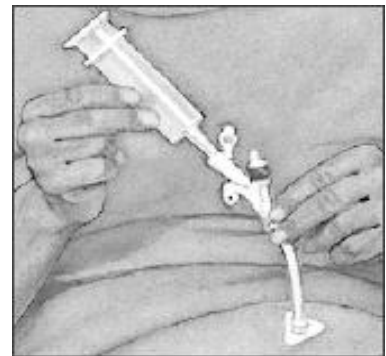
Bolus tube feedings are most often given every four to six hours during waking hours. They are only given in the stomach. When starting a feeding, open and use only the amount of liquid food (formula) your healthcare team tells you to use.

Tube Feeding Solution: _____

Tube Feeding Amount: _____ cans/day

Water: _____ ml/day

1. Flush tube with water as described in the section **“Flushing Your Feeding Tube”**.
2. Pull the plunger out of the feeding syringe.
3. Bend and pinch feeding tube between your fingers to prevent contents in tube from leaking out.
4. Open the cap on the feeding tube.
5. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
6. Pour the formula into the feeding syringe.
7. Fill feeding syringe only half-full.
8. Hold the feeding syringe straight up, unbend the tube and let the formula run through the tube by gravity.
9. If the formula is not going in by gravity, put the plunger back into the feeding syringe. Then gently push down slowly on the plunger.
10. Continue pouring tube feeding into the feeding syringe until you have given the prescribed amount.
11. After feeding, flush tube following the instructions on the previous page titled **“Flushing Your Feeding Tube”**.
12. Remove the feeding syringe and close the feeding tube cap.



Tips About Tube Feeding

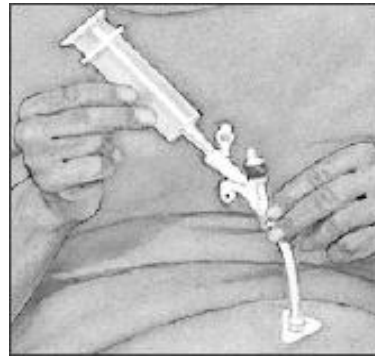
1. Position your body so you are sitting up or so the upper-body is above the level of the stomach.
2. Wash your hands before cleaning and touching the feeding equipment.
3. Feedings should be given at room temperature to lower the risk of getting cramps and/or diarrhea.
 - a. Open cans of formula should be kept in the refrigerator covered with plastic wrap.
 - b. Throw out open cans if they are not used within 24 hours.
 - c. Refrigerated formula should be taken out 15-20 minutes before a feeding and allowed to warm up to room temperature.
 - d. Do **not** microwave the formula.
4. Always flush the feeding tube with 60 ml of water after a feeding. This will help to prevent the formula from clogging the tube.
5. If medicines that are pills or tablets are to be given through the feeding tube, always be sure they are finely crushed and dissolved in 30 ml of warm water.
 - a. Do not mix different types of medicine together. Each medicine needs to be given separately.
 - b. Flush the tube with 30 ml of water before and after medicine is given to wash them down.
6. If you are experiencing any symptoms such as diarrhea, constipation, nausea, vomiting, or skin irritation, call your healthcare team.

Giving Medicine through your Feeding Tube

It is important to check with your healthcare team to ensure that **all** of your medicines can be given through your feeding tube. Not all medicines can be crushed or given thru the feeding tube.

If tube feedings and medicines are due at the same time, administer the medicines half-way through the tube feeding.

1. Prepare liquid medicines and set aside.
2. If medicines are in tablet form, crush medicines and let them sit in 30 ml of warm water for five minutes before putting it in the tube.
3. Pull the plunger out of the feeding syringe.
4. Open the cap on the feeding tube.
5. Put the tip of the feeding tube syringe into the feeding tube.
6. Bend and pinch the tube between your fingers to prevent the contents in the tube from leaking out.
7. Fill the feeding syringe with 30 ml of warm water.
8. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
9. Unbend and release the feeding tube by holding it straight up, letting the water run into the tube.
10. Once the water is empty, pour the medicines into the feeding syringe.
11. Hold the feeding syringe straight up and let the medicines run through the tube by gravity.
12. If the medicine is not going in by gravity, put the plunger back into the feeding syringe. Then gently push down slowly on the plunger.
13. Flush the tube with 30 ml of warm water between each medicine.
14. Continue pouring the medicines until all of it goes into the feeding syringe.
15. After all medicines have been given, flush tube with 30 ml.
16. Remove the feeding syringe and close the feeding tube cap.



If Your Feeding Tube Gets Clogged...

Try Water First!

1. Pull the plunger out of the feeding syringe.
2. Bend and pinch feeding tube between fingers to prevent contents in tube from leaking out.
3. Open the cap on the feeding tube.
4. Put the tip of the feeding syringe in the feeding tube.
5. Pour 60 ml of warm water into the feeding syringe.
6. Hold the feeding syringe straight up, unbend the tube and let the water run through the tube by gravity.
7. Do not force the water into the tube with the plunger.
8. Bend and pinch the tube between your fingers.
9. Remove the feeding syringe.
10. Close the cap on the feeding tube.
11. Leave the tube capped for 5 minutes and allow the water to “soak” the area.
12. Repeat this a few times if needed to unclog the feeding tube.

Contact your healthcare team for help if none of these tips work to unclog your feeding tube.

If you are in need of immediate assistance, please call 732-235-2465 and select the option that best meets your needs.